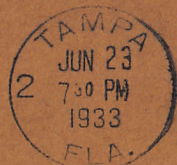


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Session 96



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Beloved Companion:

As you progress along the Path to the point where you will meet and know the Masters of Wisdom, you will find that, indeed, that Way is as narrow as the edge of a Sword and as straight as its blade, but the first rule of the Aryan Section of the Great White Lodge has been expressed by Madame Blavatsky in "The Voice of the Silence" as follows: "The first step is to live to benefit and serve Mankind."

In order to further explain this Ideal, remember it does not matter so much the words used, as long as the Thought is made clear, and it seems to me that this first step has been covered by the Hierophant Lazenby as simply perhaps as it can be rendered, and he also gives the preliminary pledge of the Inner Court, "This step may be taken at any time, in any condition of mind, and under any conceivable circumstances; one thing only is essential, the Ideal of human Service must really appeal to the man or woman who thus dedicates their Life, they must have a sincere desire to serve their fellow men, if they desire to help Mankind to a higher and happier, more Intellectual and Self-reliant condition; they may pledge themselves to this Ideal of human betterment and so doing, they will take the first step towards the Supreme Wisdom; they must be willing to work for the Ideal of Human Well-being, as they, themselves, conceive it, to sacrifice their personal Aims and Pleasures to some extent in the Cause."

This first step is, however, curious in that it never comes to an end, that is, the movement of its initial impulse continues while all succeeding steps are being taken. One simple Dedication, made in the silence and secrecy of the Inner Man will be found helpful, and therefore, prepare your Sanctum as you did for the experiment of the 10th lesson, seating yourself quietly in front of your mirror, with no light save the single flickering flame of a candle on your left. Repeat the Dedication that you may become one of the Dedicated Servants of the Supreme Light, "I, here and now, with all that I am of weakness and of strength, offer myself and all my thoughts, emotions, sensations, aspirations, volitions, and actions, to the Service of my fellow man. May this Ideal from this moment guide and direct me, mold and educate me, that my Life may become an embodiment of it. May all my Forces, Capacities, and inherent Possibilities be developed to this end. I will to give myself wholly to the Ideal of Human Well-being."

Extinguish your candle and remain for ten minutes in quiet contemplation of the words you have used as a Pledge. The Hierophant further says, "Remember that you are to become a Servant of Man, from now on keep this Thought, like a Torch, burning steadily in the forefront of your Consciousness."

I want you to read the above very carefully for it is given to you at this stage of your Progress as the Ideal, the ultimate Goal. I do not mean that it is to be literally fulfilled here and now. To take the Dedication is to prepare to live so as to benefit and serve Mankind thruout your development, and you must recognize that the first step in becoming efficient in benefitting and serving Mankind with Wisdom, Knowledge, and Love is the perfecting of the Self, and so the Path of the Occultist precedes the Path of the Mystic. We are not ready for the Mystic Way, in its fuller sense, until we are approaching the time of freedom from the Wheel of Birth and Death. For you to try to escape from that Wheel prematurely is but to evade your training. Like the racing Yacht which fails to round the outermost marking buoy, you are disqualified. You have not fulfilled the conditions of Liberation that

demand that you shall shirk nothing and leave behind you only that which you have mastered, equilibrated, and outgrown. The day will come when you will be free from the Wheel of Birth and Death and enter into the Light, to return not again, unless you choose the Way of the Buddhas of Compassion.

But if you try to put aside the Elements and their problems before that day dawns, you are shifting your helm to the homeward course before you have rounded the marking buoy. You are more like the man who, because he was afraid of it, buried his talent in the ground. God does not want a misplaced devotion to an unripe Ideal, and so I want to discuss these two Ways with you, that you may take up the one and press forward, while retaining in Consciousness the Ideal of the other, that is the ultimate Goal. The Mystic Way which leads to Divine Union is so well known that it is often forgotten that there is another Path, totally different in route, which leads in the end to the same Goal. We are so accustomed to hear the Renunciation of the World and the Abnegation of the Self set up as the only true Path of the Soul which seeks the Highest that we hardly dare whisper that there may be another Path, the Path of the Mastery of Manifested Existence and the Apotheosis of Self.

There are two ways in which God can be worshipped - you can worship Him in Unmanifested Essence, or you can worship Him in His Manifested Form, both ways are legitimate, provided that in worshipping the Manifested Form you do not forget the Essence, and in worshipping the Essence you do not confuse it with the Manifested Form, for these are the Sins of Idolatry which consist in wrongly placed emphasis.

The Mystic seeks to worship God in Essence, but the Essence, or Root, of God, being unmanifest, eludes Human Consciousness. The Mystic then, in order to conceive the Object of his Worship, has to transcend normal human Consciousness. It is not possible to know the inmost nature of a state of Existence unless you enter into it and share, in some measure at least, its experience; and the Mystic, therefore, has for his task the freeing of his Consciousness from its habitual bondage to Form. The Way of the Mystic is the Way of Renunciation, until he breaks all the limitations of his Lower Nature and enters into his own Freedom. Nothing then remains that can withhold him from God, and his Soul flies upward to enter the Light and return not again.

But the other Way is not a Way of Renunciation, but a Way of Fulfillment; it is not a breaking away from the Path of Human Destiny but a Concentration and Sublimation of that Destiny. Each Soul which takes that Path lives thru, in its own experiences, every phase and aspect of Manifested Existence and equilibrates it, spiritualizes it, and absorbs its Essence. The Aim of those who follow this Path is to obtain complete Mastery over every other Aspect of Created Life. When we say Mastery we do not mean the Mastery of a Slave Owner over his Slaves, rather do we mean the Mastery of the Virtuoso over his Instrument, a Mastery which rests upon his Power to adapt himself to its nature and enter into its spirit, and so draw forth its full capacity of Interpretation. The Adept who has gained the Mastery over the Sphere of Luna interprets the Message of the Moon to the World and shows forth her Powers in equilibrated Balance. The Kingdom ruled by the Master of the Temple is no Absolute Monarchy, he does not obtain that Mastery in order to make Thrones, Dominions, and Powers serve himself, but in order to bring to them God's Message of Salvation and call them to their High Heritage. He is a Servant of Evolution and it is his task to bring Order out of Chaos, and Harmony out of Discord, to reduce the unbalanced Forces to Equilibrium.

When the question is asked, "What ought a man to desire?" - it is a question which depends entirely upon the Soul and the stage of Evolution of the one who has inquired. That Soul has to complete its human experiences before it is ready for Divine Union; it must pass the Nadir of the Descent into Matter before it can come onto the Path of return. It is a false Teaching which bids us eradicate from our nature as false and foolish, anything which God has implanted there. The Love of Beauty, the vitalizing Urge of clean, normal, healthy Instincts, the Joy of Life - we would be poor creatures without all these. God gave them to us and we may presume He knew what He was about when He did so. Who are we to judge His Handiwork and condemn that which He found good? But this Law forbids the abuse of these things, not the use for the purpose for which they were intended. The Path of the "Hearthstone Fire" is a far sounder and more effectual Discipline of the Instincts than is the Hermit's Caves of Peace, for frightened by the Elemental Forces when he meets them unpurified and unprepared, the Ascetic flees from what he believes to be Temptation. It is a far sounder policy to equilibriate the warring Forces in our own natures until we can handle the unruly team of Instincts and make them draw the Chariot of the Soul with the Power of their untiring speed.

Considering both phases of the matter, you will see that the whole problem like so many others lies in the Doctrine of Reincarnation. If we believe that all human achievement has to be accomplished in one Life and that at the end of it we shall be judged, we are liable to be stampeded into an Idealistic Attitude which we have not yet attained by our process of Natural Growth. Freedom from the Wheel, the Advancement of Matter, Divine Union - these will come for all of us in due course of Evolutionary Time, for it is the Aim of Evolution to bring us to them, but that time may not be yet. We are foolish if we allow another however advanced to judge for us where we stand upon the Ladder of Evolution and to decide what is to be our next step. Let us have the true Courage of our Convictions and follow our own deeper promptings - if our Urge is to worship God in His Glorious Manifestation, let us do it whole-heartedly, for therein lies the Way of Attainment for us. This does not mean the unleashing of the Impulses. The Dance of Nature is an ordered and rythmical movement, and we must not break from our own place in the Living Pattern or we will spoil it. We must work with Nature, for Nature's ends, if she is to be our mother. Here is Discipline enough for any Soul.

If, on the other hand, our promptings are toward a withdrawal onto the Mystical Path, let us ask ourselves honestly whether we are following that Path because the Call of God in our Hearts is so strong, or because we have found Life so difficult that we want to escape forever from its problems.

This will therefore conclude the Initiation and Dedication. In future lessons we will take up further steps, remembering that it is an Ideal which you are to hold before your Inner Vision, letting it color your actions and reactions in the affairs of daily Life, but at the same time remembering, also, that you have much work to do before you are ready to enter into that Way, just as the one who is in High School must turn to his task with Zeal and Fervor, applying himself conscientiously to his work, even tho he retains in his Consciousness the Ideals of the College Life as his ultimate Goal.

With this lesson I am saluting you a Companion of the Masters, for that is now your Degree, having taken the Initiation and Pledge given.

In the Bonds of the Eternal Brotherhood,

Sri Dayananda, S. C.